

# VA CHICAGO LINKS

Volume II, Issue 12  
July 21- August 3, 2003

## Public Forum to Address LS Enhanced Use Lease Process

VA will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, July 30 from 7 to 9 pm to provide a forum for veterans and other stakeholders to receive information and voice their opinions regarding VA's plans to enter into a long-term enhanced use lease of its Lakeside property.

The public meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn City Centre at 300 E. Ohio, which is less than two blocks away from the Lakeside campus. Staff, patients and other interested parties are encouraged to attend.

## Transition of PM&R Completed

Two patients from Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service were moved from Lakeside to West Side on August 17 as PM&R inpatient services were consolidated at the West Side campus.

The process used for moving the PM&R patients is the same as will be used on August 7 when VA Chicago completes its transition of inpatient services. While that move is expected to be much larger and involve up to 35 inpatients, the Transition Management staff was pleased by the success of the PM&R move and extended its appreciation to staff that assisted.

## HMS Trainee Vacancy Opens at VA Chicago

VA Chicago is one of 20 facilities nationwide approved to mentor a Healthcare System Management (HSM) Trainee in FY04. Applications for the position will be accepted through August 8.

Trainees assist VA management by analyzing, advising on and/or coordinating healthcare delivery systems and operations. The position requires a high degree of analytical ability and specialized knowledge of the basic principles, practices and programs related to the management of a healthcare system.

Employees qualified for the GS-9/11 position are encouraged to apply. Applications are available through the HRMS office or interested parties can call Bev Speer at ext. 54514.

## Author to Provide Autographed Copies of Book to Staff & Vets

Thomas A. Geldermann, author of *The Lure of the Dutchman: Cracking the Mystery of the Lost Mine*, will be in the West Side atrium on Tuesday, July 22 from 2 to 4 pm to autograph complimentary copies of his book, an adventure tale set in the

American Southwest about the Lost Dutchman Gold Mine.

Mr. Geldermann is generously donating hundreds of copies of his book for the benefit of our patients, staff and visitors. Lakeside staff that wish to receive an autographed copy should call Voluntary Service at extension 53560.

## Welcoming and Transition Parties

Two events are being planned to recognize West Side and Lakeside coming together as one family and to celebrate a new beginning for VA Chicago.

The celebrations will take place Tuesday, September 9 at Lakeside and Wednesday, September 10 at West Side. Both will be held outside, weather permitting, or in the auditorium. Each celebration will have staggered hours to accommodate employees on all shifts. They will be held from 7 to 9 am for the midnight tour, from 11 am to 1:30 for the day tour and from 3 to 6 pm for the evening staff.

The committee planning the celebrations has decided upon the theme "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow". Planned activities include food, music, games, prizes and the recognition of key staff that helped to coordinate the transition.

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## CPRS Template Enhances Patient Education

Staff members know they can relieve the anxiety of a patient by explaining a treatment plan or what to expect from a medical or surgical procedure. While patient education at VA Chicago has steadily improved over the years, a CPRS template has been designed to help make it even more effective.

The Patient Education Interdisciplinary Record (PEIR) template designed for VISN 12 facilities helps prompt employees to remember to address all of the areas required by JCAHO for education and provides documentation to give staff credit for the teaching they provide.

PEIR meets all of the criteria for the education process. The goals portion of the template provides basic education topics that employees can access by following the prompts.

Employees should remember that vital sign and other medical treatment information should only be included in the PEIR note if the patient is educated on these topics.

The Patient Education Committee wants to remind staff that our veterans deserve to be involved in the health care process and we can help put them at ease by education.

## Study: VA Health Care Significantly Improved

A recent study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* shows that the quality of health care veterans receive from VA has improved significantly since 1994. A major revamp of VA's health care system that began in 1995 led to the improvements.

Reviewers gathered data on standard quality of care indicators, including those for preventive care, such as the frequency of mammography, vaccination and colorectal cancer screening. The data also included markers for quality outpatient care: reaching target blood pressure readings for patients with hypertension, prescription of aspirin within 24 hours of a heart attack, cholesterol screening and control for diabetes and heart disease patients and appropriate preventive services like vaccinations and screenings for other patients.

Researchers found significant improvement for all quality of care indicators measured by VA between 1994 and 2000. They also found VA outperformed Medicare on all 11 markers the two systems had in common between 1997 and 1999, and on 12 of 13 indicators measured between 2000 and 2001.

Last year the Institute of Medicine recognized VA for implementing these changes and improving the quality of health care in America.

## Mark Your Calendar

**July 22** – Farewell Tea for Dr. Raymond Joehl, Chief, Surgical Service, Lakeside Division. 2 to 4 pm in the Lakeside auditorium.

**July 30** – Public Hearing regarding VA's plans to enter into a long-term enhanced-use lease of its Lakeside property. All interested parties are encouraged to attend. 7 to 9 pm in the LaSalle Ballroom at the Holiday Inn City Centre, 300 E. Ohio Avenue.

**August 7** – Transition of Inpatient Services from the Lakeside campus to the West Side campus.

**August 26** – Blood Drive. 9 am to 4 pm in the West Side auditorium.

**August 28** – Women's Equality Day Celebration featuring Dr. Elnora Daniel, President of Chicago State University, as keynote speaker. 10:30 am – West Side auditorium, with pic-tel to Lakeside and Crown Point.

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VA Chicago Links is published bi-weekly for the benefit of our employees, volunteers, patients and friends. Articles of interest are welcome. The editor reserves the right to use and edit contributed articles. The submission deadline is one week prior to publication. Items may be sent to the Director's Office at Lakeside or West Side (Mail Point 00PR) or submitted by e-mail to the editor at [raymond.leber@med.va.gov](mailto:raymond.leber@med.va.gov)